

ELECTRIC UTILITY TREE PRUNING AND REMOVAL SPECIAL PROVISIONS

TR – 0159 (Rev. 12/2001)

These special provisions are intended for tree pruning purposes done by Electrical Utility owners or their contractors. These special provisions are not intended for use in conjunction with encroachment permits issued for outdoor advertising or for non-utility tree pruning.

I. GENERAL

- A. In partnership with Caltrans, this permit shall not restrict an Electric Utility owner from complying with applicable California Public Resources Codes, California Public Utility Commission (CPUC) General Orders, and other Federal, State, or local laws that require clearances between vegetation and energized power lines.

Work may only be performed by the contractor(s) listed on this permit, or contractor(s) who have obtained a Double Permit (DP) in conjunction with the utility owners' permit.

- B. This permit authorizes the pruning/removal of trees located on State rights-of-way, and/or access onto the State rights-of-way to the location for pruning/removal of trees that are located outside of the State rights-of-way.
- C. Scheduling of work may be restricted by Caltrans. Traffic volumes for special events, commute traffic and other high volume traffic flows may restrict pruning hours and/or days.
1. Traffic control is generally authorized from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Extended hours for traffic control, may be authorized by Caltrans.
 2. All traffic control shall conform to State Standard Plan requirements. When required, the use of a flashing arrow board is MANDATORY.
- D. All debris, cuttings and/or tree limbs shall be removed from State rights-of-way, and the work area must be left in a safe and presentable condition at the end of each workday. In areas where the spread of disease or insects is a concern, tree limbs and wood shall be disposed in accordance with requirements of Federal, State and local agencies. When approved by Caltrans, clean loads of wood chips may be placed only at designated locations within the State rights-of-way, so as not to create a fire hazard, attract illegal dumping or obstruct drainage ditches or inlets.
- E. All pruning shall be in compliance with ANSI A300-1995, the American National Standard for Tree Care Operations. Tree, Shrub and Other Woody Plant Maintenance-Standard Practices and the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Tree-Pruning Guidelines, 1995 or subsequent versions thereof.
- F. All operations of work shall be suspended during inclement weather or fog when lane or shoulder closures are needed to perform the work. No work is allowed during periods of high winds that could spread debris into the traveled way.
- G. The Caltrans Maintenance Landscape Specialist may communicate the location of specific trees which are considered of high value because of their local community significance, historic landscape potential, or documented horticultural value. The Electric Utility owner may be required

to limit the amount of foliage removed from these high value trees in order to preserve their structure and appearance.

II. TREE PRUNING

In addition to the ANSI A300 standards and the ISA Tree Pruning Guidelines, the following requirements shall be followed:

- A. Directional pruning as defined in the ISA Tree-Pruning Guidelines may be performed on trees which will be pruned for the first time or trees which have had some pruning in the recent past. Trees which cannot be directionally pruned, may be submitted for consideration of removal.
- B. Initial severe “V” shaped directional pruning may be performed on trees only after review of the trees by Caltrans. Prior approval shall be obtained from the Caltrans District Landscape Specialist or Caltrans District Landscape Architect. Severe “V” directional pruning on any tree species along state or federal designated scenic highways requires review and approval from the Caltrans District Landscape Architect.
- C. Previously “rounded over” trees shall be maintained as in the past unless Caltrans and the Electric Utility owner determine the tree can be directionally pruned or the crown restored without causing structural defects that may cause the new growth to present a liability.
- D. Minimum clearances established by the CPUC General Orders, California Public Resources Code and other Federal and State laws must be adhered to. The amount of clearance beyond the established minimum shall be determined by Caltrans and the Utility company. The Utility company shall furnish the Caltrans district representative current CPUC and/or other regulatory agencies minimum clearance standards. For most locations, where conditions allow, a minimum pruning frequency should be established that would not require additional pruning for one year. Consideration shall be given to the species, health, growth habit and condition of each tree when determining the amount to prune. Branches should be cut to laterals or the parent branch and not at a pre-established clearing limit.
- E. Under most conditions, trees may be pruned during any season of the year. The timing of pruning of host trees (eucalyptus, pine, and elm) in areas of known disease or insect infestations may be restricted unless the specific host trees are not in compliance with California Public Resources Codes, CPUC General Orders and other Federal, State, or local laws, or if an immediate hazard exists to public safety.

III. TREE REMOVAL

Only trees which do not require replacement, compensation or mitigation planting may be removed under this permit.

- A. Volunteer growth from stumps and seedlings growing directly under the electrical lines which will ultimately grow into the electrical lines and have little or no value to the desired condition of the roadside may be removed without additional Caltrans approval.

Note: Seedlings are less than 4” (0.1 m) in diameter and less than 20’ (6.1 m) tall.

- B. Caltrans approval is required where clear cutting of all growth under the electrical lines is desired. Groups of seedlings or volunteer growth that provides a visual screen for adjacent development shall not be removed without review by Caltrans District Landscape Architect.
- C. A Caltrans District Landscape Specialist may approve other tree removals when one of the following criteria are met:
1. Any tree which, by mutual agreement, is a potential hazard that should be removed, such as; leaning, uprooted, or dead trees. Replacement trees, compensation or mitigation plantings are not required.
 2. Trees which have low species value or trees in obviously poor condition due to poor health, or severe structural defects, and which are not of high value, provide a highway screen, wildlife habitat or other landscape function. (The Western Chapter, International Society of Arboriculture Species Classification and Group Assignment pamphlet may be used as a reference to determine low species value.) Replacement trees, compensation or mitigation planting are not required.

Prior to tree removals under Section C, a Caltrans/Electric Utility Tree Removal Request shall be completed, signed by the Electric Utility Company authorized representative, and submitted to the Caltrans District Landscape Specialist. At least one legible photograph showing the tree(s) to be removed shall be provided by the Electric Utility Company and submitted with the tree removal request.

Trees shall not be removed until the Caltrans District Landscape Specialist approves and signs the Tree Removal Request. The Electric Utility Owner shall have a copy of the approved Tree Removal Request at the work site during removal operations.

- D. Removals requiring compensation, replacement trees or mitigation planting:

Compensation, replacement trees, or mitigation planting shall be required for trees of high value, with a historic landscape potential, trees which provide a highway screen, wildlife habitat, or other landscape function. Trees which require replacement, mitigation planting or compensation SHALL REQUIRE A SEPARATE PERMIT and approval by the District Landscape Architect. (The Western Chapter, International Society of Arboriculture Species Classification and Group Assignment Pamphlet may be used as a reference to determine high species value.)

IV. CHEMICAL CONTROL

- A. Upon approval by Caltrans to use chemicals, the electric utility owner shall also obtain approval by the County Agricultural Commissioner.
- B. Control of resprouting tree species shall be conducted using an integrated vegetation management program, which includes chemical and non-chemical methods.
- C. A pest control recommendation from a licensed Pest Control Advisor must be obtained, and a copy of the recommendation must be submitted to the State Landscape Specialist prior to chemical application.